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RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 1700
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1681
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1656
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1669
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1618
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DUSHANBE 001233

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SUBJECT: TAJIKISTAN: JAPAN READY TO PROVIDE MORE BORDER ASSISTANCE

CLASSIFIED BY: Thomas Armbruster, DCM, State, State.

REASON: 1.4 (a), (c)

¶1. (C) The Japanese Ambassador to Tajikistan Hiroshi Takahashi said the Japanese government intends to provide increased technical assistance to Tajik border guards and rebuild another road in the south of the country from Dusti to Kurgan-Tyube. In a meeting with Chargé d'Affaires and Post's Senior Law Enforcement Advisor June 30, the Japanese Ambassador sought U.S. advice on where their assistance would be most needed and he shared intelligence and security information. Ambassador Takahashi pointedly noted increased Russian anxiety over Japan's role in Central Asia. Takahashi said that the Russians were increasingly wary of Japanese assistance because the Russians are not interested in a sustainable and successful Tajik border force. The Russians want to be able to say that the Tajiks are worse off after Russian troops withdrew and depend on the Russians to manage their border.

JAPANESE ASSISTANCE

¶2. (SBU) The Japanese government has already committed to repairing the road linking the U.S.-constructed bridge at Nizhniy Pyanj to Dusti, a town en route to Dushanbe from the bridge site. The Japanese are currently seeking bidders for the project and expect the road will be completed in one to two years. In addition, they are looking into rebuilding the road from Dusti to Kurgan-Tyube also on the road between Dushanbe and the bridge. The road from Kurgan-Tyube to Dushanbe is presently in suitable shape and does not need repair. Once completed, these two sections will smoothly link Dushanbe to the bridge and from there on to Kabul making traffic and trade easier and faster.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Takahashi revealed the Tajik government has already approached him requesting assistance for border guards and outposts. Some of the equipment the Tajiks requested include extremely sophisticated air technology such as surveillance balloons. The Japanese are considering providing

the Tajik border guards with electronic sensors on its southern border with Afghanistan, mobile watchtowers and radar equipment. They have already committed to providing ten bulldozers and excavators to the Shurobad outpost. The remote outpost has been isolated since flooding destroyed roads leading to the border station. Bulldozers and excavators will help cut roads and clear rockslides and snow in the wintertime, allowing supplies to reach the post.

¶4. (C) The Japanese understand the fuel expense needed to operate the posts and CdA and SLEA suggested supplying border posts with alternative energy supplies such as micro-hydropower stations, which would generate electricity for the posts throughout the year from the Nizhniy-Pyanj River. Solar panels are a good option to provide not only electricity, but also heat and hot water to zastavas that only have about 2 hours of electricity in the summer and where 90% of them do not have any electricity in the winter.

¶5. (C) Takahashi indicated Japan may provide assistance to an Asian Development Bank-funded customs clearance project. Their assistance would help set up more posts and speed communication between customs posts to quickly clear inspected cargo.

SECURITY CONCERNS

¶6. (C) The Japanese Ambassador was also interested in learning more about China's role in Tajikistan. General Zuhurov will return from meetings in Beijing July 1 and Takahashi's sources say the Chinese are training Tajik military personnel. China is quickly and quietly increasing its infrastructure investment in Tajikistan while providing modest military assistance.

DUSHANBE 00001233 002 OF 002

¶7. (C) According to Takahashi, 2000 extremists may be coming from Pakistan to Tajikistan and up through to Osh, Kyrgyzstan via the western China route and entering the country through Tajikistan's eastern border at Murgab. The eastern border traditionally has been less guarded due to its extreme terrain.

¶8. (C) Takahashi did not view the IMU to be a threat to Tajikistan because he believes they have factionalized and are not operating as a cohesive group. Although agreeing that Uzbekistan has an interest in destabilizing Tajikistan, he believes that internal forces within the government and within the country are responsible for instability and has heard rumors that the Ferghana Valley is a hotbed of fermenting violence, which could explode sometime this summer.

¶9. (SBU) COMMENT: Post is pleased Japan is taking a larger role in border assistance and cooperation. Japan is a strong ally that understands U.S. policy in the region. Japan is a welcome and important new partner and they may help convince Russia that counternarcotics cooperation is truly an international effort in everyone's interest. Ambassador Takahashi and CdA agreed to continue regular meetings and share information. END COMMENT.
HOAGLAND